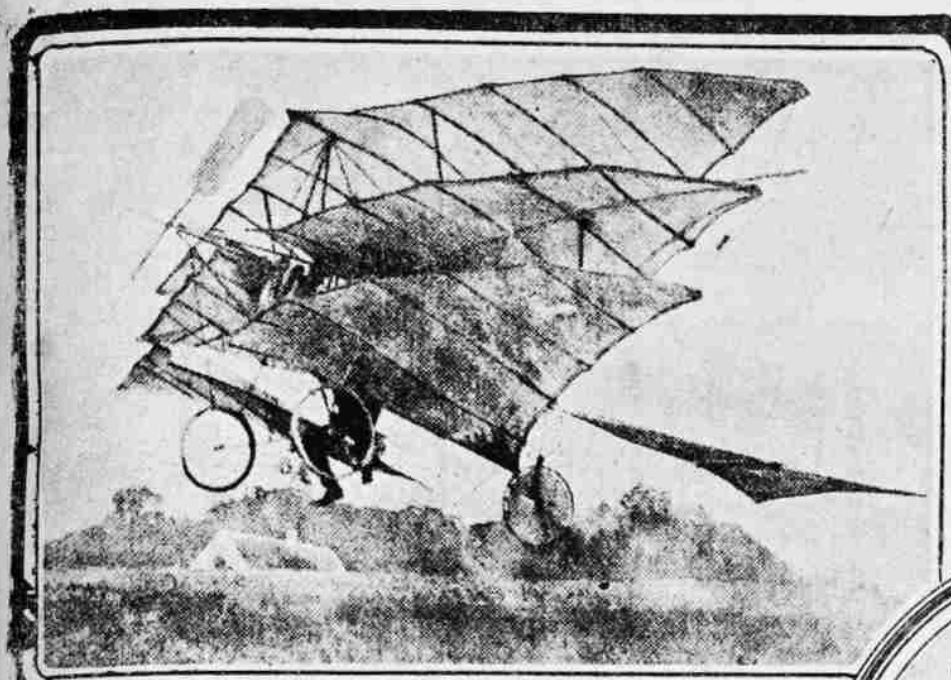
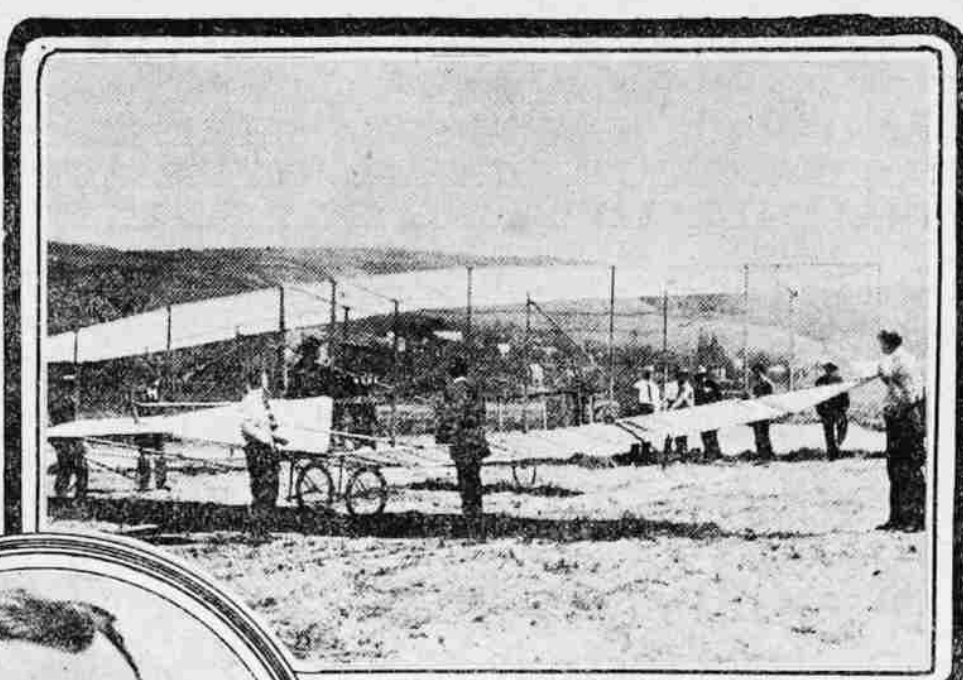


ALL THE HUMAN FLYERS ARE AFTER THIS \$52,000

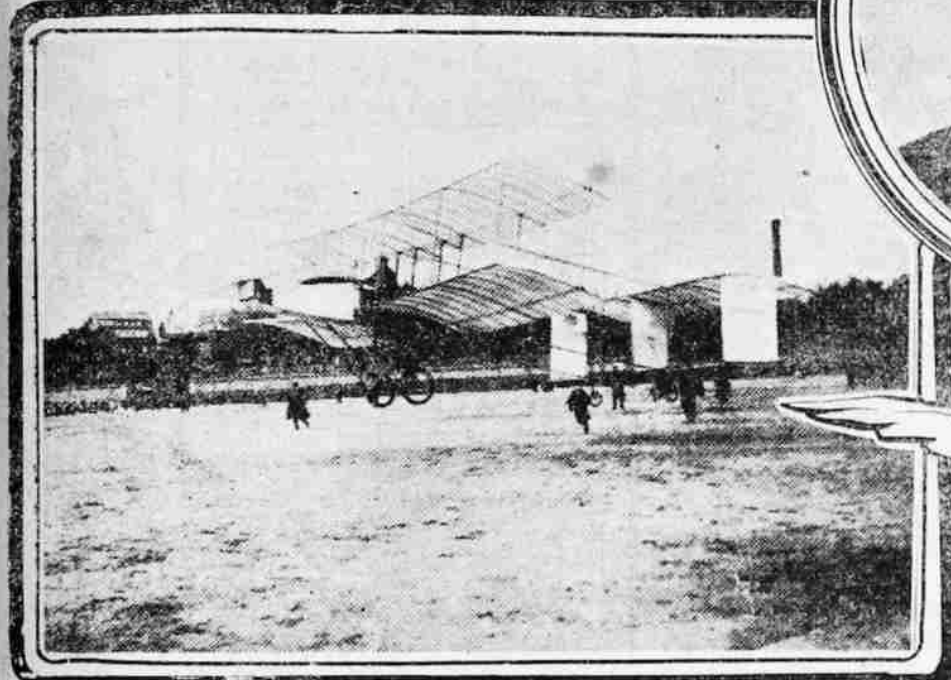
Will an American Win the Great Michelin Prizes for Heavier-than-Air Flying Machines? Just Announced, and Some of Which May Be Competed for on This Side?



Eliehammer's Danish Aeroplane.



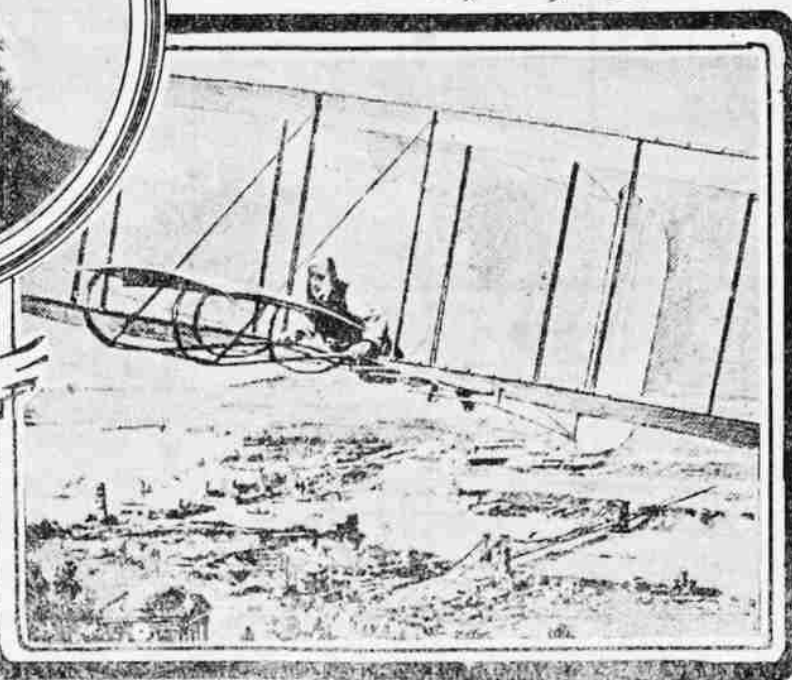
The Baldwin Aeroplane Which Has Made Successful Flights at Hammondsport, N.Y.



Farman's Aeroplane in Flight - Beating the Record 894 yds. in 5 seconds.



M.A. MICHELIN who offers \$52,000 in prizes for heavier-than-air flying machines.



Orville Wright's Famous Glider.

"Bravo!" yelled the impressionable Frenchmen, when Henri Farman, in his aeroplane, heavier than air, made a measured kilometre, turning the stakes on the grounds of the Aero Club of France, just outside of Paris, and landed back at the point where he started. He had won the Deutsch-Archdeacon prize of 50,000 francs—\$10,000. This was on January 13 last. The Frenchmen shrugged their shoulders. There was to be no more sport in aviation—the final prize had been won. Why should other persons risk their lives just for a few thousand francs? Everybody else was discouraged. There was no more advantage to be gained. But in a twinkling the whole aspect of things was changed. Andre and Edouard Michelin, the French millionaires, came forward, wrote a formal letter to the president of the Aero Club of France, and more than quintupled the Deutsch-Archdeacon prize. Two hundred and sixty thousand francs for the man who can fly machines heavier than air—\$52,000. But best of all, the contest does not necessarily have to be held in France. America has a good chance of holding one or more—it needs only a few club of official standing to act as judge and the contests may be held

here in the United States. There are fourteen aero clubs now in this country, any one of which is eligible. Chief of these is the Aero Club of America, with headquarters in New York, which is associated with the international organization, and there are clubs in Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, San Francisco and other cities. The flights for distance can be held anywhere under the conditions imposed by the Michelin; all they ask is that a recognized aero club take charge. So it won't be long before right here in this prosaic twentieth century land of ours we may be seeing aeroplanes curvetting through the air for the Michelin prizes.

It seems only the other day that the bicycle was a marvel. Yesterday the automobile was a crudity. Today both are nearing perfection and the automobile that everybody laughed at ten years ago is the swift monster of the road today. "Who shall say," asks M. Michelin, "that the aeroplane that can fly a mile today may not travel a thousand miles ten years hence? At any rate, I expect to see it. I believe it can be done." So, when they thought the time ripe the two brothers wrote

this letter to the president of the Aero Club of France:

"Dear Sir—Being desirous of contributing to 'aviation' (the science of flight), the new industry, one more which saw the light of day in France, we take pleasure in offering you a cup and special prize which are to be bestowed upon an apparatus heavier than air."

"First—The cup will be in the shape of an object of art of not less than 10,000 francs in value. It will be endowed with the annual sum of 15,000 francs for ten years."

"Second—A special prize of 100,000 francs."

"These prizes will be given under the following conditions:

"Annual Cup—Each year before January 31 (except for the year 1908) the Aero club will fix the programme of the contest, which will close the 1st of January following. It will decide the dimensions of the track, the turning points, the heights, etc., and all the conditions under which the flights will have to take place along the track, which must be a closed circle. The winner will be the flyer who, by midnight of December 31, will have made the greatest distance on the given track, either in France or in one of the countries affiliated with the Aero club. This record, to be valid, must be confirmed by the International Federation of Aero clubs. The distance should be, each year, double that of the previous one traveled by the winner. The winner of the cup for 1908 should make at least double the distance made by Henri Farman in his latest record of January 13. This cup will be entrusted each year to the aero club of the country where the established, confirmed record has been beaten by the greatest distance. The prize of 15,000 francs will be awarded to the victor. The victor. If in any year the cup is not awarded the aero club which has held it up to that time will retain it, and the 15,000 francs will be added to the same sum the following year. The victor of the tenth year will become the owner of the cup and a fac simile of it will be handed over to the aero club of the country in which the record was made. The trials are to be made in France under the auspices of the Aero Club of France; abroad, under the control of the aero club of the country where the races are held, on condition that the club is affiliated with the Aero Club of France, and under the conditions above mentioned."

"Special Prize—If, before January 31, 1918, a flyer, piloting his two-seated machine, occupied, gains this record, confirmed by the Aero Club of France: Flying from a given place in the Department of the Seine, or that of the Seine and Oise, turning the Arch of Triumph in Paris, then around the cathedral at Clermont-Ferrand, and settling on the summit of the Puy-de-Dome, 1456 meters high, and in the less than six hours counted from the Arch of Triumph to the summit of the Puy-de-Dome, a prize of 100,000 francs—\$20,000."

These, then, are the prizes that Americans—or anybody else for that matter—may compete for. Farman has made his kilometre—about three-fifths of a mile, only a quadruple that distance two weeks later.

we going to enter for the Michelin prize? Of course we are! One of the brothers was in control of the machine when it made an eight-mile flight at the rate of a mile a minute, and in trying to soar over a sand dune he pushed the lever the wrong way. The aeroplane dashed to the earth and was a complete wreck, when, if the lever had been properly worked the apparatus would have cleared the dune like a bird. However, it was wrecked and the Wrights cut the damaged aeroplane to bits rather than have anyone see how it worked. All they saved was the gasoline engine."

The Wrights are the pioneers today in America and there isn't the slightest doubt but that they have the proper conception of a machine that can really fly. Down in North Carolina before the accident they made daily flights with success every time, until Wilbur Wright unwittingly touched the wrong lever. Even the denizens of the air took the thing for a huge bird and flocks of crows and even an eagle followed it as it whizzed through the air, sixty miles an hour. After the accident the brothers went back to Ohio and are now building a new machine in the hope of winning the prize. If there were an official trial they would have won it with miles to spare already. "We are flying a little now," said Wilbur Wright, "but soon we will fly with it. It is only a matter of a little time when those who wish to keep an airship may do so just as automobiles are in use today. The Michelin prize will be won easily and it is just as likely it will be won here as abroad."

be doubled in 1908. There are a dozen men now who can do it. Eight kilometers, little more than a mile, will be made and the Michelin prize will surely be won. And as the years pass you will see the previous year's record doubled. We will see an aeroplane make twenty miles before the end of 1909. Nothing can stop someone making fifty miles in 1910 and a thousand miles in 1911. It is only a case of building motors sufficiently light, that will not break down. Of course, if the distance keeps on doubling we will get fantastic figures at the end of ten years—it will take a trip around the world to win the prize in 1918. But here are automobiles going around the world today, where ten years ago they were nothing but toys and the joke of everybody. Cannot the aeroplane be developed as fast in another ten years? I think so. Perhaps I may be wrong, but I remember the story of the gentleman who offered to eat a locomotive wheel if it could drag a train along the track; the first steamboat was called "Fulton's Folly."

"As for the flight to the Puy-de-Dome, that will be easily accomplished within a few years. All we need is a better, lighter motor. The distance is 350 kilometers, or about 210 miles. It will be easy to make forty miles an hour—the Wrights have already done sixty—and with a good day it ought to be done in five hours. The machine with two seats has not been used, but several are in course of construction. From what we have heard from abroad there is a squadron of machines already in course of construction. Here we will have the Wrights, M. Baldwin, and others. In France there are Farman, Delagrange, Santos-Dumont, Esnault Pelterie, Count de la Vaulx, Leblanc, Zens, Bleriot, Gasmier, and a host of others. Then Eliehammer in Denmark, Schabaky in Russia, and several others in Germany and England who will stand a good chance of winning. I haven't the slightest doubt but that each year from now on we will see the distance doubled, according to Messrs. Michelin's generous deed of gift, and a 1000-mile flight is not far off."

The Baldwin machine, which has been flying very successfully near Hammondsport, N. Y., piloted by Lieutenant Selfridge, U. S. A., will be entered from America. P. W. Baldwin, its inventor, hopes to win, too. "My machine," said he, "the 'White Wings,' has struck the right principle and as soon as we get details perfected we expect to make long flights. Shall I enter for the Michelin prizes? Of course. And mark my word, more than one of them will be taken by Americans. We are on the right track now, and it is only a question of a good motor."

J. N. Williams is another American who will enter for the prize, and so will C. Oliver Jones, both of whom have

Of course, the news of these prizes have stimulated everybody interested in flying machines in this country. The Aero Club of America has taken up the Michelin prizes and if some of the distance flights are not held on this side of the Atlantic the members will be extremely disappointed. "There isn't any reason," said Captain Homer W. Hodge, one of the founders and first president of the Aero Club of America, "why all the Michelin prizes should not be tried for in this country. Our aeroplanes are as good as any on the face of the globe. Farman made a measured kilometre. Right here in America the Wrights have made eight miles at the rate of sixty miles an hour. We are all tremendously interested in the event and New York aeroplanists are immensely grateful to Messrs. Michelin for their generosity in offering such splendid prizes. The Aero Club of America is affiliated with the Aero Club of France and under the deed of gift we can have any or all of the distance trials here in this country under our sanction. Of course, the flight to the Puy-de-Dome must be held in Paris. I have no doubt, with Farman, that this prize will be won within the next four or five years."

"Farman's four records will easily

built aeroplanes with novel features. It will be a great sight when these pioneers of flight get together somewhere in this country to fly for the Michelin prize! Picture the great things of silk and aluminum and copper maneuvering over the plain, darting here and there at the speed of a railway train! Man will soon become a bird with wings and body—the wings the great sails and rudders of his aeroplane; the body the motor working away hour after hour with the regularity of a bird's heart-beats. Farman had already won the first Michelin prize, flying four kilometers without touching the ground, or two and a half miles, and in less than four minutes. Next year the man-bird who wins must fly five miles. Who doubts that it will not be an easy task, when the Wrights already have made their eight miles?

And why do the generous Michelin give the prizes? The answer is simple. They are the manufacturers of automo-

bile tires. To reduce the weight of the auto means to lengthen the life of the tire. To achieve that result now the automobile engine must be made lighter in weight. "That is why we have offered the prizes," said Edouard Michelin, in Paris, president of the Michelin tire companies. "We recognize that the aeroplane will contribute to the advancement of the motor car by reducing the weight of the engine. Today we have motors that weigh but two kilos per horse-power. Tomorrow it may be but a kilo and a half. And who shall say where it will end. Reduce the weight of the automobile one-third and you lengthen the life of the tire by one-half."

Now for the tests! It won't be long before the aeroplane, the machine heavier than air, will be essaying flights as far as the automobile travels today. The first of the Michelin prizes was won within a week after it was offered. Who gets the second? May it not be an American? Who knows?

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And now the Wright brothers, Wilbur and Orville, of Dayton, O., flying over the sand dunes near Hammondsport, N. Y., have made a thirty-two-mile flight, or forty times as far. Nobody knows very much about the aeroplane of these men of mystery. The reason is not hard to find—they don't want anyone to know. "We want to try for the Michelin prizes, of course," said Orville Wright, "and we are not going to let anybody get our ideas from us. Our machine is the outcome of years of patient effort. We believe that the secret of the navigation of the air lies in being able to control constantly the gliding of a man-carrying aeroplane. Are

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